

**Remarks at an Independence Day Celebration**

*July 4, 2016*

Thank you so much! Ms. Janelle Monáe! Come on out here and give a bow! Thank you so much. So, in addition to Janelle Monáe, please give Kendrick Lamar a big round of applause! Here he is, right here.

So on behalf of all of us, obviously we were hoping to share their incredible talents with 5,000 people out on the South Lawn. And Fourth of July is about family, it's about the American family, it's about us getting together with the people we love most.

We all know that our freedoms are dependent on an incredible group of men and women in uniform and their families who look out for us every single day. The—some of them are in attendance here today. Please give them a big round of applause. For those in our military who could not attend, we just want to say how much we admire, respect, and appreciate everything you do to fight for our freedom every single day.

And obviously, the Fourth of July, we enjoy the hotdogs, we enjoy the burgers, we enjoy the barbecue, we enjoy the day off for a lot of us—[*laughter*]*—*we enjoy the fireworks. But it's important to remember what a miracle this country is. How incredible—how incredibly lucky we are that people, generations ago, were willing to take up arms and fight for our freedom. And then, people inside this country understanding that there were imperfections in our Union and were willing to keep on fighting on behalf of extending that freedom to all people and not just some.

And that story of independence is not something that happens and then we just put away. It's something that we have to fight for every single day. It's something that we have to nurture, and we have to spread the word, and we have to work on. And it involves us respecting each other. And it involves us recognizing that there are still people in this country who are going hungry, and they're not free because of that. There are still people in this country who can't find work, and freedom without the ability to contribute to society and put a roof over your head and your—look after your family, that's not yet what we aim for.

And so on a day like this, we celebrate, we have fun, we marvel at everything that's been done before, but we also have to recommit ourselves to making sure that everybody in this country is free, that everybody has opportunity, that everybody gets a fair shot, that we look after all of our veterans when they come home, that we look after our military families and give them a fair shake, that every child has a good education. That is what we should be striving for on Independence Day.

So to all of you who are here in this amazing gathering, we love you, and we're grateful that you could join us. To our incredible artists, thank you for always sharing. I've got to tell you—I have to tell you that these two I've gotten a chance to know, and they are both amazing artists and talented and popular and doing great things, but they're also very conscious about their responsibilities and obligations. And they put in a lot of time and effort on behalf of a lot of causes that are important. We're really proud of them for that.

And just because it's a job of a father to embarrass his daughters—[*laughter*]*—*I've got one last job. It is—it just so happens that we celebrate our country's birthday on the same day that we celebrate my oldest daughter's birthday. So just a quick happy birthday for Malia.

*[At this point, the President led audience members in singing "Happy Birthday."]*

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:57 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Janelle Monáe and Kendrick Lamar. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Independence Day celebration.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Lamar, Kendrick; Monáe, Janelle; Obama, Malia.

*Subjects:* Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Service and dedication; Holidays and special observances : Independence Day.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD201600446.